

[Grippe with Complications]

Beliefs & Customs - Folk Stuff 17

FOLKLORE

NEW YORK Forms to be Filled out for Each Interview

FORM A Circumstances of Interview

STATE New York

NAME OF WORKER Joseph Vogel

ADDRESS

DATE April 26, 1939

SUBJECT Hospital "Grippe With Complications"

1. Date and time of interview

April 25, 1939

2. Place of interview

Hospital and Medical Employees, Local 129

3. Name and address of informant

A Porter, Beth Moses Hospital

Library of Congress

4. Name and address of person, if any, who put you in touch with informant.

5. Name and address of person, if any, accompanying you

6. Description of room, house, surroundings, etc.

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NEW YORK

FORM C Text of Interview (Unedited)

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NAME OF WORKER Joseph Vogel

ADDRESS

DATE April 26, 1939

SUBJECT Hospital "Grippe With Complications"

It's the little boss who gives the most trouble. If a big shot like the superintendant — don't quote me — if he tries any funny stuff, the Union has got him by the balls. But complain to the superintendant about a little snot like the housekeeper and he says it's personal.

Tactics!

At Postgraduate hospital the housekeeper's got a anti-Negro bias. Chauvinism!

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At Beth Moses the housekeeper's got a anti-White bias. I'll give you an example. I'm not talking about myself. Keep me out. Black or white, it's the same thing.

One of the porters. Take anyone, what's the difference? He gets sick with the grippe. Whose fault is it? He's working in the main building and gets overheated. The housekeeper sends him on an errand to the laboratory. Overheated, he goes through a cold alley. He gets the grippe. Figure it out for yourself.

This porter I'm telling you about, when he comes back to work the housekeeper sends him to the dispensary to be examined so as to decide on his fitness to return to work.

Sanitary measures. Okay!

2

At the dispensary this porter I'm telling you about waits from one to four. The visiting doctor don't show up. There are fifteen patients waiting. No doctor!

I'm not criticising. I'm giving you a straight story. Finally Finally, they send for an interne. The patients, you gotta do something, you can't leave them there. The interne takes care of them. He examines the porter and gives him the OK to start working as far as his health is concerned.

Is that enough?

No! The housekeeper refuses to accept the verdict of the interne. Well, who are you going to believe? No! She insists the porter needs an examination by the outside doctor.

"Listen", I say to her. "Where is the United States? On this side or across the ocean?"

Dictatorship!

Don't quote me, I'm not mentioning any names.

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The next day, this porter I'm telling you about goes to see the visiting physician. Dr. Hitlin, a gentleman, a doctor with a private clinic. This porter describes him the situation. He's amazed. What's the matter, if a interne is good enough to take care of clinic patients, why isn't he good enough to take care of the porter? If his examination is accepted for fifteen patients, what's the matter with one porter?

That put the housekeeper in her place. Low down! A snake's vest button! Y'understand?

It's not enough. She's got it in for the Union. All right, step on me!